



6

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

6.1 EMPLOYMENT USES

6. Economic Prosperity

GOALS

- Promotion of Old Town San Diego as a major destination for historic and cultural heritage tourism.
- Economic well-being of locally-owned and operated businesses that provide services and goods to residents and visitors.
- Commercial buildings and uses that support and enhance Old Town San Diego's historic community character.

INTRODUCTION

As the birthplace of California, Old Town San Diego plays an important role in the City's tourism industry. The promotion of the cultural and historic importance of Old Town as a visitor designation can result in economic benefits for the Community and the City. Cultural heritage tourism, as an economic development strategy supports local and small business growth, provides job opportunities, increases property values, and encourages private investment. It supports and enhances the community's historic character, preserves historic resources, and creates destinations for tourists and local residents.

As the birthplace of California, Old Town San Diego is rich with cultural heritage tourism. Old Town San Diego has been an economic center for cultural heritage tourism since the 1930's. Tourists travel to Old Town to experience the activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present, including irreplaceable historic, cultural, and natural resources. The quality and consistency of historic and cultural buildings and sites, period architecture, landscaping, museums, open space and parks attract visitors. Activities, cultural events, and walking tours play an important role in attracting visitors.



Old Town's historic resources and ambiance draw visitors and locals to the community's attractions and businesses.



Well-designed visitor-serving uses including hotels and restaurants support historic tourism and generate sales and employment.

The Urban Design Element addresses the design of new buildings and landscaping to ensure they are consistent with Old Town's historic character. The Mobility Element addresses pedestrian environment, transit access, adequate visitor parking and wayfinding signage that would help enhance the visitor experience. The Land Use Element identifies the major historic and cultural uses and sites and the Sub-Districts that encourage hotel and visitor related commercial uses.

6.1 Employment Uses

HOTEL AND VISITOR USES

Hotel and visitor uses have a strong presence in Old Town San Diego with hotels that cater to business people, individual travelers, and family vacationers. While the community itself is a major tourist attraction, its location close to the airport, freeways, transit, beaches, Sea World, and Downtown contribute to visitors staying within Old Town.

RETAIL GOODS AND SERVICES USES

San Diego Avenue has historically functioned as a “main street” for Old Town San Diego with storefront businesses that foster a vibrant public realm and pedestrian activity. Retail uses, including sales of crafts and art, and restaurants and cafes that cater primarily to visitors. Authentic design that enhances the public realm and strengthens the visual and pedestrian connection with the State Historic Park will attract visitors and support the community’s sense of place.

OFFICE USES

Office uses are also drawn to Old Town San Diego by the historical ambiance and stimulating environment. The Community has a variety of office users including professional businesses and government offices that assist in supporting local retail and restaurant businesses.



Retail, goods and services uses can foster engagement with the community while supporting businesses and artisans.

POLICIES

- EP-1.1** Promote Old Town San Diego as a historic and cultural heritage tourism destination.
- EP-1.2** Promote an atmosphere that attracts craftsmen and artisans who could live, work, and sell their products.
- EP-1.3** Encourage guided and self-guided walking tours.
- EP-1.4** Support special events and entertainment activities that emphasize the historic qualities of the community and do not detract the community’s historic character or negatively affect adjacent residential uses.
- EP-1.5** Encourage the use of tourism-related local funding sources to promote Old Town San Diego nationally and internationally as a cultural heritage tourism destination.
- EP-1.6** Encourage the use of local, state, and federal programs to incentivize the retention of small local businesses within Old Town San Diego.
- EP-1.7** Support the quality of exhibits and the character of buildings and landscaping within Old Town San Diego to support historic and cultural heritage tourism.



Office uses in Old Town support diverse business activity and provide customers for retail and restaurants.



Old Mission Olive Works Company, 1928.